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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 003186

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/12/2014

TAGS: KJUS MARR PREL AR KICC ARTICLE DEMARCHE

SUBJECT: DELIVERY OF ARTICLE 98 DEMARCHE TO ARGENTINA

REF: STATE 237228

Classified By: Ambassador Lino Gutierrez for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Ambassador Gutierrez delivered on November 12 the Article 98 talking points from reftel to the Argentine Under Secretary for Foreign Policy Roberto Garcia Moritan.

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Ambassador Gutierrez underscored the importance of Article 98 agreements in our bilateral relationships and noted we currently have 96 such agreements worldwide. He said obtaining an Article 98 agreement with Argentina remained a priority for both the Embassy and the Administration and that this would be a topic of major importance in Garcia Moritan's visit to Washington next week for the U.S.-Argentina pol-mil bilats. Regarding potential pressure on Argentina from EU countries not to enter into an Article 98 agreement, the Ambassador pointed out that this was a bilateral issue between our countries designed to protect our mutual interests.

12. (C) Ambassador Garcia Moritan acknowledged the importance of reaching an accommodation with us and reiterated Argentina's desire to continue discussions on a possible agreement. He opined, however, that the current political dynamic between President Kirchner and the Argentine congress (where Kirchner lacks a strong personal support base) made an Article 98 agreement problematic for the present. Garcia Moritan felt that when Kirchner solidified his own constituency in Congress (which he is convinced will occur in next year's legislative elections), a mutually acceptable agreement protecting both U.S. and Argentine interests could be reached.

13. (C) Comment: The good news is that Argentina understands the importance we attach to reaching an Article 98 agreement and its importance to expanded military cooperation with us. Garcia Moritan's commitment to continued discussions on the issue was welcome even if his placing the blame for lack of progress on Congress was dubious. Garcia Moritan's visit to Washington next week will provide an excellent opportunity for senior leaders to reinforce once again the importance we attach to a successful conclusion of these discussions. End  
Comment  
GUTIERREZ